

1. (Original) A conveyor belt for moving food items through a heating zone in a contact toaster, the belt comprising:
 - a reinforcement material having two faces;
 - a coating disposed over at least one face; and
 - a multiplicity of ribs raised above at least one of the coated faces;
wherein the belt is configured to move the food items through the heating zone.
2. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the reinforcement material is comprised of fiberglass, nylon, polyester, aramid, polyethylene, polyolefins, polyimides, or films thereof.
3. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the coating is comprised of silicone rubbers, urethane rubbers, or fluoropolymer, including fluoroplastics (such as PTFE) and fluoroelastomers, or blends thereof.
4. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 3, wherein the ribs are comprised of at least one of a silicone rubbers, urethane rubbers, and fluoropolymers.
5. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 4, wherein the coating and the ribs are comprised of different materials.
6. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 4, wherein the coating and the ribs are comprised of a liquid silicone rubber formulation.
7. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 4, wherein the coating and the ribs are comprised of a polytetrafluoroethylene.
8. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 4, wherein the ribs are comprised of low density polytetrafluoroethylene.
9. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the reinforcement material is comprised of fiberglass and the coating and ribs are comprised of silicone rubber.
10. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the ribs are arranged in a regular, repeating, natural, random, or cyclical pattern or combinations thereof.

11. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the ribs form a pattern of a series of straight, parallel, essentially parallel, undulating, zigzag, or sinusoidal ribs or combinations thereof.

12. (Currently Amended) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the longitudinal direction of the ribs is perpendicular transverse to the longitudinal direction of the conveyor belt.

13. (Currently Amended) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the conveyor belt comprises two coated faces, each face including ribs raised above the surface of the face, wherein the ribs of one face are straight and parallel to each other and the longitudinal direction of the ribs is perpendicular transverse to the longitudinal direction of the conveyor belt, and the ribs of the second face are arranged in a repeating, sinusoidal pattern.

14. (Currently Amended) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, further comprising a second multiplicity of ribs ~~raised above at least one of the coated faces~~, wherein the multiplicity of ribs are raised above a first face of the reinforcement material and the second multiplicity of ribs are raised above a second face of the reinforcement material.

15. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 14, wherein the coating disposed over at least one face of the reinforcement material and the second multiplicity of ribs are comprised of a liquid silicone rubber formulation.

16. (Currently Amended) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the multiplicity of ribs have a height of ~~about 0.020 inches up to about 0.050 inches~~.

17. (Original) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the belt is configured to be coupled to a second belt of the contact toaster, the second belt comprising at least one of a chain belt, wire belt, and metal belt.

18. (Currently Amended) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the belt is configured to contact a first face of the food item items so that the toaster caramelizes a second face of the food item items.

19-48. (Cancelled)

49. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the belt further comprises at least one rib raised above a second face of the reinforcement material of the belt.

50. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 49, wherein the belt is configured to be coupled to a second belt comprising at least one of a chain belt, wire belt, and metal belt.

51. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 49, wherein the at least one rib raised above the second face of the belt is configured to contact a second belt and the first face of the belt is configured to contact food items.

52. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 49, wherein the belt is configured to contact a first face of food items and is configured such that the heating zone caramelizes a second face of food items as the belt moves food items through the heating zone.

53. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 52, wherein the belt is configured such that a heating element of the heating zone is configured to contact the second face of food items as the belt moves food items through the heating zone.

54. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 49, wherein longitudinal directions of ribs raised above the first face and the second face are transverse to a longitudinal direction of the belt.

55. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 49, wherein the ribs raised above one face are straight and parallel to each other and the longitudinal direction of the ribs is transverse to the longitudinal direction of the conveyor belt, and the ribs raised above another face are arranged in a repeating, undulating pattern.

56. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 49, wherein the multiplicity of ribs have a density of at least one rib per linear foot of the flexible belt.

57. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 49, wherein the multiplicity of ribs form a pattern of undulating ribs.

58. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 49, wherein the multiplicity of ribs have a height of up to about 0.050 inches.

59. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 49, wherein the belt has a structure that is continuous.

60. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 59, wherein the belt is configured to be coupled to a second belt that has an open structure.
61. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 1, wherein the belt has a structure that is continuous.
62. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 61, wherein the belt is configured to be coupled to a second belt that has an open structure.
63. (New) A conveyor belt according to claim 16, wherein the ribs have a height of at least about 0.020 inches.

64. (New) A contact toaster for toasting food items, comprising:
- a heating zone configured to toast food items; and
 - a conveyor belt configured to move food items through the heating zone, the belt comprising,
 - a reinforcement material having two faces;
 - a coating disposed over at least one face; and
 - a multiplicity of ribs raised above at least one of the coated faces;

wherein the belt further comprises at least one rib raised above a second face of the reinforcement material of the belt.

65. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 64, further comprising a second belt comprising at least one of a chain belt, wire belt, and metal belt, wherein the belt is configured to be coupled to the second belt.

66. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 64, further comprising a second belt, wherein the at least one rib raised above the second face of the belt is configured to contact the second belt and the first face of the belt is configured to contact food items.

67. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 64, wherein the belt is configured to contact a first face of food items and the heating zone caramelizes a second face of food items.

68. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 67, wherein a heating element of the heating zone is configured to contact the second face of food items.

69. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 64, wherein longitudinal directions of ribs raised above the first face and the second face are transverse to a longitudinal direction of the belt.

70. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 64, wherein ribs raised above one face are straight and parallel to each other and the longitudinal direction of the ribs is transverse to the longitudinal direction of the conveyor belt, and ribs raised above another face are arranged in a repeating, undulating pattern.

71. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 64, wherein the multiplicity of ribs have a density of at least one rib per linear foot of the flexible belt.
72. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 64, wherein the multiplicity of ribs form a pattern of undulating ribs.
73. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 64, wherein the multiplicity of ribs have a height of up to about 0.050 inches.
74. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 64, wherein the belt has a structure that is continuous.
75. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 74, wherein the contact toaster comprises a second belt coupled to the belt.
76. (New) A contact toaster according to claim 75, wherein the second belt has an open structure.